

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 AID-05 IGA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4513

SECDEF WASHDC

OSAF WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS BE

SUBJECT: F-16 COPRODUCTION

REF: BRUSSELS 5920, 6002, AND 6059

1. SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE PROVIDES THE TEXT OF TWO LETTERS TO GENERAL DYNAMICS (G.D.) ON THE SUBJECT OF AVIONICS COPRODUCTION, TOGETHER WITH SOME ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON THE SPECIFIC ISSUE TO WHICH THESE LETTERS ADDRESS THEMSELVES -- THE MECHANISM FOR COORDINATING BELGIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE AVIONICS PORTION OF F-16 COPRODUCTION. END SUMMARY.

2. THE FOLLOWING LETTER, IN ENGLISH, DATED JUNE 16, SIGNED BY P. VANDEN BOEYNANTS, MINISTER OF DEFENSE, WAS SENT TO H. MURPHY OF G.D.'S BRUSSELS OFFICE. IT WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUMMARIZED IN BRUSSELS 5920: "DEAR SIR, I HAVE BEEN AWARE

BY MY COLLEAGUE, THE MINISTER OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, OF SOME DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY GENERAL DYNAMICS CONCERNING THE REPRESENTATION OF THE BELGIAN ELECTRONICS FIRMS AND THE SHARING OF THE COPRODUCTION WORKS TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THEM. I WOULD LIKE TO INFORM YOU THAT AS FAR AS THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE IS CONCERNED AND IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT WITH THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, ALL THE DRAWINGS, FOR THE ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTION OF THE BELGIAN INDUSTRIES SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO SYBELEC. THIS ORGANIZATION WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SHARING THE WORKS BETWEEN THE VARIOUS BELGIAN FIRMS. THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS WILL USE ITS RIGHT OF ARBITRATION IN CASE OF DIFFICULTIES. YOURS SINCERELY, P. VANDEN BOEYNANTS."

3. AS EXPLAINED IN REFTELS, THIS LETTER CAME ABOUT AFTER AMERICAN FIRMS COMPETING FOR RADAR SUB-CONTRACT, HUGHES AND WESTINGHOUSE, MADE PRESENTATIONS TO POTENTIAL COPRODUCERS IN BELGIUM. THEY SPOKE TO ELECTRONICS FIRMS GATHERED TOGETHER UNDER SYBELIC UMBRELLA, BUT ALSO SPOKE SEPARATELY TO SIEMENS BELGIUM, WHICH IS NOT A SYBELEC MEMBER.

4. THE VANDEN BOEYNANTS-MURPHY LETTER RAISED AS MANY QUESTIONS AS IT ANSWERED. INFORMALLY, OUR BELGIAN CONTACTS ADMITTED TO US THAT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SYBELEC AND SIEMENS STILL HAD TO BE RESOLVED. OFFICIALS FROM BOTH THE DEFENSE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS MINISTRIES TOLD US THAT THEY REGARDED THIS AS AN INTERNAL QUESTION TO BE WORKED OUT BY THE BELGIANS THEMSELVES. TOWARD THAT END, THEY CONVENED A MEETING ATTENDED BY BOTH VANDEN BOEYNANTS AND ECON AFFAIRS MINISTER OLEFFE, TOGETHER WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF SYBELEC FIRMS AND SIEMENS. WE WERE TOLD THAT ANOTHER LETTER WOULD BE SENT AFTER THAT MEETING.

5. THE FOLLOWING LETTER, IN ENGLAISH, DATED JULY 10, SIGNED BY H. ROBERT, COMMERCIAL MANAGER OF ELECTRONICS FIRM M.B.L.E., WAS SENT TO D.B. SCHEIDEMAN OF G.D. AT FORT WORTH. ROBERT SERVES AS PRESIDENT OF SYBELEC, BUT THIS LETTER IS ON M.B.L.E. LETTERHEAD AND ROBERT USES ONLY HIS M.B.L.E. TITLE. COMPLETE TEXT FOLLOWS: "DEAR MR. SCHEIDEMAN, SUBJECT: F-16 PROGRAM - DISTRIBUTION SIEMENS - SYBELEC. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A MEETING WAS ARRANGED YESTERDAY, 9TH JULY 1975, AT THE CABINET OF THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE TO SETTLE THE PROBLEM CREATED BY THE ATTITUDE OF SIEMENS TOWARDS SYBELEC IN RELATION WITH THE AVIONICS PRODUCTION IN BELGIUM. WERE ATTENDING: - FROM THE CABINET SIDE: MR. VANDEN BOEYNANTS, MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE; MR. OLEFFE, MINISTER OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS; COLONEL LEFEVRE; MR. COESSENS; MR. BOLAND; - FROM THE INDUSTRIAL SIDE FOR SYBELEC: THE

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FOUR FIRMS ACEC, BELL, M.B.L.E., SAIT;
FOR SIEMENS: MR. VANDENBOSSCHE, MR. HANON AND
MR. VERMEERSCH. THE AIM OF THE MEETING WAS TO INFORM US
OF THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE MINISTERS WHAT REGARDS THE
DISTRIBUTION SIEMENS-SYBELEC. THE DECISION IS AS FOLLOWS:
SYBELEC IS THE SOLE VALID REPRESENTATIVE TO DISCUSS THE
DISTRIBUTION OF THE AVIONICS PROGRAMME IN BELGIUM. SIEMENS
MUST ABSOLUTELY WORK WITHIN THE FRAME OF SYBELEC AND IT IS
FORBIDDEN FOR THEM TO HAVE SEPARATE CONTACTS WITH THE
AMERICAN FIRMS CONCERNED. THIS MERELY CONFIRMS
MR. VANDEN BOEYNANTS' LETTER DD. 16TH JUNE, ADDRESSED TO
G.D. I THOUGHT IT USEFUL TO INFORM YOU OF THE ABOVE AND
REMAIN, WITH KIND REGARDS, YOURS SINCERELY, H. ROBERT,
COMMERCIAL MANAGER."

6. ALTHOUGH THE LETTER DOES NOT SAY SO, BOLAND OF ECONOMIC
AFFAIRS TOLD US THAT THOSE ATTENDING THE MEETING DESCRIBED
IN ROBERT'S LETTER AGREED THAT ALL COPRODUCTION DATA INCLUDING
CIRCULATION OF BIDS WOULD BE SHARED BY SYBELEC WITH NON-
MEMBER FIRMS.

7. THESE TWO LETTERS STILL LEAVE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS
UNANSWERED, AS DISCUSSED HERE WITH AIR FORCE ASST. SECY.
SHRONTZ ON JULY 10. WE ARE FOLLOWING THE ISSUE CLOSELY,
BOTH WITH G.D. AND BELGIAN OFFICIALS (BUT NOT DIRECTLY
WITH BELGIAN FIRMS). WE WILL REPORT FURTHER AS DISCUSSION
DEVELOPS. WASHINGTON AGENCIES MAY ANTICIPATE THAT G.D.
REPRESENTATIVES WILL WISH TO DISCUSS THIS ISSUE AND SEEK
TO COORDINATE THEIR REPLY WITH USG. FIRESTONE

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